

Talking Points
Aerospace Alliance Announcement
Monday, October 26, 2009

- I am pleased to join Governor Riley today in announcing the Aerospace Alliance. This is an exciting day for the states of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Florida.
- Our Gulf Coast region is home to some of the world's leading aerospace companies.
- Our states are also home to a number of key NASA facilities and military installations that are critical to Department of Defense flight missions and training operations.
- In fact, when we look at the number and caliber of aerospace companies that call our states home, the military bases and NASA facilities in the area, and the number of people employed in this sector in the region, we realize that the Gulf Coast states together already make up one of the largest aerospace corridors in the world.
- The Aerospace Alliance we are launching today will promote our common assets and the long-standing tradition of excellence that we share when it comes to the aerospace industry.
- The alliance is a joint partnership among Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi. This non-profit, public/private organization will be made up of business leaders, economic developers, and government officials from the three states.
- Alliance members will work to position the Gulf Coast region to take advantage of opportunities to grow the aerospace, space, and aviation industries in our states.
- In working toward this goal, alliance members will advocate policies, programs, and projects to support the growth of these sectors at the local, state, and federal levels.

- The alliance's first priority will be to promote the KC-45 aerial tanker program for the region.
- If the tanker project is awarded to regional partners Northrop Grumman and EADS, these aircraft would be built on the Gulf Coast and would benefit Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi by bringing 48,000 direct and indirect jobs to the region.
- If this project is awarded to these companies, our region will become the fourth largest aerospace corridor in the world when it comes to the production of large-body aircraft.
- The alliance will also work to promote space-related initiatives like the Constellation project, which will also have a significant and positive impact on the Gulf Coast region and, like the KC-45 tanker program, will result in numerous supplier companies locating to the area.
- Great opportunities exist for the aerospace, space, and aviation sectors in our region. The Gulf Coast states have much to offer prospective aerospace companies – we offer prime locations, excellent transportation networks, and quality research and development programs.
- And perhaps our greatest asset is our workforce. We share a plentiful, dedicated, and experienced workforce that has a long history of excellence in this field.
- But we live in a global economy and are competing with countries all over the world for aerospace and aviation investment.
- By taking a regional approach and collaborating, our states can have a much greater impact when promoting our region to global companies.

- By continuing to market our shared advantages, we can promote the Southeast region of the U.S. for what it is: a world-class aerospace, space, and aviation corridor.
- On behalf of the state of Mississippi, I am proud to be a part of this alliance and look forward to all it will accomplish for Mississippi; our partners in Alabama, Louisiana, and Florida; our region; and our entire country.